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East-West Trade and Export Control List

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

OF

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OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 18, 1967

Mr. REES. Mr. Speaker, last October, President Johnson added another important span to the bridges his administration is building between the American people and the people of Eastern Europe. He announced the removal of some 400 items from the list of export control.

I believe it was an important gesture in our efforts to ease cold war tensions.

Some thought otherwise. Some looked over the list of items and concluded that they were insignificant and had little, if any, trade potential. I recall that manhole covers was one of the items used as an example.

So it came as a surprise to me to learn that my distinguished colleague from California [Mr. Lipscomb] is now criticizing the list on the ground that it contains strategic materials—materials that could conceivably be used against our fighting men in Vietnam. And he has accused the administration of misleading the American public with regard to the items in question.

Mr. Speaker, the last thing I want to do is add to this confusion. If possible, I would like to clear it up.

What are the facts?

First of all, the gentleman from California [Mr. Lipscomb] contends that the list of 400 items contains, among other things, jet aircraft engines, diesel engines, and machine tools. The Department of Commerce has already addressed itself to this assertion. These items are not on the list. They never were. They are still under export control to Eastern Europe. Mr. Lipscomb was misinformed.

As to the actual list, I am not certain what the gentleman from California [Mr. Lipscomb] might have been referring to. I have read it carefully. It appears innocent enough to me.

But more to the point, this list is not something that was hastily drawn up and carelessly reviewed. The ground rules were quite explicit: each item had to be of a nonstrategic nature—and each had to be available on the foreign market.

And, while the list was made public last October, I am told by the Commerce Department that it was actually compiled last February—8 months earlier. At that time, it was distributed to the members of the Interdepartmental Committee on Export Controls for a complete review. This committee is represented by the State Department, the Defense Department, the Treasury Department, the Department of the Interior, the Department of Agriculture, the Federal Aeronautics Administration, the Atomic Energy Commission, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Office of Emergency Planning. A copy of the list was also supplied to the Central Intelligence Agency.

Each had a crack at it. And, in point of fact, some 10 items included in the original list were actually deleted at the suggestion of several of the agencies; some because they were in the scarce national supply category, and others because of their possible strategic implication.

So I, for one, cannot fault the administration.

I believe it has taken a bold and courageous step in the field of peaceful international trade.

I believe, further, it has been prudent, keeping the ultimate objective of national security in sight at all times.

I hope we will continue to build such bridges to Eastern Europe. For it is in our own national interest to do so.